

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A media rights licensing apparatus, comprising:

a rights owner application configured to execute on a computer configured to receive workflow rules, pricing rules, payment rules, and a license request template defined by a rights owner;

a repository database coupled to the rights owner application, wherein the repository is configured to store the workflow rules, pricing rules and license request templates defined by the rights owner; and

a rights exchange application coupled to the repository database, the rights exchange application configured to:

receive a licensing request from a potential licensee related to a first media property;

conduct a licensing transaction of at least a first right associated with the first media property by determining rights available for the first media property by searching the repository database;

present a first license template defined by the rights owner;

receive first license template entries from the potential licensee;

transmit in real-time the first license template entries to the rights owner;

receive from the rights owner approval of a license for the first right, and to transmit the approval to the potential licensee.

2. The media rights licensing apparatus as defined in Claim 1, further comprising a rights search engine wherein the rights owner can configure which system entities and which attributes for the system entities can be used as searchable parameters by the search engine.

3. The media rights licensing apparatus as defined in Claim 1, further comprising a license request template defined by the rights owner.

4. The media rights licensing apparatus as defined in Claim 1, further comprising a plurality of rules defined by the rights owner, the rules configured to define which media rights licensing apparatus users are authorized to perform predefined actions.

5. The media rights licensing apparatus as defined in Claim 4, wherein the predefined actions include one or more of accepting a licensing request, denying a licensing request, and negotiating a licensing request.

6. The media rights licensing apparatus as defined in Claim 1, further comprising a plurality of notifications defined by the rights owner, the plurality of notifications configured to be issued during the licensing process in response to criteria specified by the rights owner.

7. A system for managing intellectual property rights, comprising:

a first module configured to receive over a network information related to intellectual property rights available for at least a first property from an intellectual property rights licensor;

a repository coupled to the first module, wherein the repository is configured to store the information related to the intellectual rights for the first property; and

a second module configured to:

present to the potential licensee a first license form defined by the intellectual property rights licensor;

receive data entered into the first license form by the potential licensee, the data including a request to license a first right;

determine if the first right is available, and if the first right is available, to submit the license request, including at least a portion of the received data, to the licensor;

transmit a license approval to the potential licensee.

8. The system as defined in Claim 7, wherein the license approval is provided by the licensor after the received data is transmitted to the licensor.

9. The system as defined in Claim 7, the repository is configured to indicate when the first right has been licensed to the potential licensee in real time.

10. The system as defined in Claim 7, wherein the repository is configured to determine the availability of intellectual property rights through bi-directional hierarchical navigation and implied data relations.

11. A method of managing and licensing rights associated with media, the method comprising:

receiving from a rights licensor of a first media an instruction defined which system entities and entity attributes can be used as search parameters by a search engine;

receiving from the rights licensor a definition of information types that a potential licensee is to provide in a license request submission for at least a first right for the first media;

receiving from the rights licensor a definition of at least a portion of a licensing transaction workflow to be used in a licensing transaction for at least the first right;

receiving from the rights licensor instructions as to what notifications are to be provided to the rights licensor and to the potential licensee during the licensing transaction;

receiving from the rights licensor authorizing instructions configured to specify who is authorized to perform predetermined acts during the licensing transaction; and

conducting the licensing transaction in accordance with the rights licensor's notification instructions, rights licensor defined workflow, and authorizing instructions.

12. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising receiving a licensing a request over the Internet from the potential licensee.

13. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising receiving from the rights licensor pricing, payment and delivery rules.

14. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the system entities include one or more of properties, rights, requests, agreements, licenses, quotes, agents, licensees, and licensors.

15. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the system attributes include one or more of a rating, a genre, a territory, a language, a term start, and a term end.

16. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the rights licensor uses a license template to define the information types that the potential licensee is to provide.

17. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the rights licensor specifies how the notifications are to be provided.

18. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein at least one of the notifications includes status information on the licensing transaction.

5 19. The method as defined in Claim 11, further comprising:

providing a licensing form to the potential licensee requesting the information as defined by the rights licensor;

receiving the requested information, including an indication as to what right the potential licensee wants to license, from the potential licensee;

10 determining if the right the potential licensee wants to license is available;

transmitting at least a portion of the received requested information to the rights licensor;

15 receiving from the rights licensor a communication indicating if the potential licensee is granted the right the potential licensee wants to license; and

transmitting information related to the grant to the potential licensee.

20. The method as defined in Claim 19, wherein if the response from the rights licensor is a license approval, updating in real time a database used to store right status information.

20 21. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the first media is a movie.

22. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the first media is a musical performance.

23. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the first media is a photograph.

24. The method as defined in Claim 11, wherein the first media is a document.

25 25. An apparatus for managing licensing transactions related to media rights, the apparatus comprising:

a first instruction stored in computer readable memory, the first instruction configured to transmit over the network to the user licensing terms defined by the licensor for a first media property;

a second instruction stored in computer readable memory, the second instruction configured to receive over a network a license inquiry from a user regarding at least a first right for the first media property;

5 a third instruction stored in computer readable memory, the third instruction configured to receive a user response to the licensing terms, the user response including one of a license acceptance, a counteroffer, and an indication that the user is not proceeding with the licensing transaction;

10 a fourth instruction stored in computer readable memory, the fourth instruction configured to set a first status in real-time related to the first right at least partly in response to the user response;

a fifth instruction stored in computer readable memory, the fifth instruction configured to transmit a notification relating to the user response to a recipient designated by the licensor; and

15 a sixth instruction stored in computer readable memory, the sixth instruction configured to receive an instruction from the licensor after transmitting the notification, and at least partly in response to the instruction, to set a second status related to the first right.

26. The apparatus as defined in Claim 25, wherein the user inquiry specifies a license time period.

20 27. The apparatus as defined in Claim 25, wherein the user inquiry specifies a territory for the license.

28. The apparatus as defined in Claim 25, wherein the user inquiry specifies a media language.

25 29. The apparatus as defined in Claim 25, wherein the licensing terms include a payment due date.